

Mr. Kerr: I agree with the hon. member for Westmorland, and think we should have some more explicit information regarding this matter than we have yet got before us.

Mr. Sutton coincided with Mr. Kerr. If this is the way the money is to be granted, we may as well stay at home, do away with the Legislature altogether, and let the Government do all the business.

Mr. End: This is just the legitimate result of giving up the initiation to the Government—an abominable system, which I always opposed, believing that ruinous consequences must follow its introduction. I would rather have perished at this desk than have given up the initiation of the money grants.

Hon. Mr. Smith: The hon. member for Gloucester is glad to have an opportunity of expressing his dislike to the system of initiation by the Government, which cannot be fairly tried at this Session. His opinion, however, is not of much importance. It would have been matter of serious regret had his valuable services been lost to the country in the way he referred to.

Mr. Brown: I am of opinion that some of the items are larger than they should be. The contingencies are entirely too large, but we have not time now to legislate for the future with reference to it, and must pay the amount already drawn from the Banks and appropriated.

Mr. Kerr: We are entering upon a new system and should be careful to avoid establishing what may prove a bad precedent. When the money asked is for claims admitted and paid, of course, we cannot refuse, but for other claims have a right to understand their nature, and have an opportunity of reducing them in every case where it may seem correct or advisable. One claim which appears on the estimate—Disputed Territory Fund—I do not know ought about although it may be perfectly right.

Mr. Mitchell: Listening to the arguments advanced by hon. gentlemen, I am confirmed in my opinion. We should endeavour to lessen the contingent expenses of both branches of the Legislature; should sweep away every officer who can be spared whether he be chief or subordinate, especially those who do not do their duty well. The whole revenues of the country are being absorbed in the contingencies.

Mr. Wilnot: The question may be asked is the Legislature to be maintained? If so, it is necessary that a proper amount be appropriated to its support. Ever since I have been a member of this House the same desire has been professed, and the same attempt made to reduce the expenses, but so far without success. As to the Legislative Council, they do not consider themselves an independent branch of the Legislature, and if the hon. gentlemen from Westmorland can succeed in curtailing their contingencies, it is more than any member ever could before.

Mr. McAdam: We are acting as if we wanted to embarrass the Government. I voted to give up to them the initiation of the money grants, and I am willing to wait until they have had a fair chance to try the principle before condemning them.

Mr. McClellan: I am pleased that this discussion has arisen; it has elicited much information and will more. The amount in first column of the estimates, having been drawn, will certainly have to be paid, although I should have preferred to have had the items furnished, but with reference to the proposed expenditure, we should certainly have the details. The accumulation of offices is becoming too great, and the people are crying out on account of the burthen entailed thereby upon them; there must be a reduction, if in no other way, in heads of departments.

Mr. Fisher: I feel the difficulty, from the position in which the Government is placed, to give that information to the House which they have a right to expect; but the shortness of the time which has intervened since we took office has rendered it impossible to examine into and prepare a detailed statement of the various sums already drawn and paid by the late Government, and for which under any circumstances, we are bound now to indemnify them. The £2,000, which is all we ask for our own appropriations, we cannot give the items of, because it is to pay expenses of the late election and the present Session, the items of which, as yet, we cannot arrive at.

The next Resolution was for a grant of £2,902 8s. 1d., for Provincial Penitentiary. When we entered the House after dinner, Mr. Mitchell was speaking. He said he found, upon inquiry, that although the most of the inmates were mechanics constantly employed, still the proceeds of their labour accounted for did not exceed £5 per head per year; he could not understand why this was, and required, before he could vote for the same, proposed some explanation. He was surprised that the Attorney General would go on and force upon the House the budget without giving that information which the House required. It had been said that there were strong reasons for shortening this session; he had no objection to this, but they were not justified in sacrificing the interests and resources of the country in their hurry, and it would be better to report progress, and let the matter stand over for a week than in this unsatisfactory way to pass over it. Much as he disliked it, yet he felt compelled to take the course he had, and he hoped that other members would likewise express them.

Attorney General explained, that of the amount asked only £500 was for future expenditure, the rest having been already drawn and paid.

Mr. Wilnot: The institution is managed by a Commission, composed of some of the most respectable and independent men in St. John. I have no doubt the estimate is correct, as the Secretary could be in his place in the House. The institution is well managed, and its accounts will be found as correct as those of any other public establishment. The Commissioners get no pay for their services.

Mr. Mitchell: It is singular to find, as we do, prominent members of the late and present Governments advocating the same measures. It might excite suspicion that they had coalesced to smother up each other's acts. I do not doubt the respectability of the gentlemen who form the Commission. As to their not getting pay I don't believe in the principle. I believe in having public services well performed, and paying a fair price for it. I don't object to payment of the amount, but I want to know how the money is spent. There is a strong feeling abroad respecting this and other establishments, and contingent expenses of some of the public offices, and it is said that this one and that one gets £100 more than his salary, and I wanted to come at the truth, and find out if there is, and where, any thing of this kind is carried on.

Mr. Smith: I really don't think there is any cause for the remark that members of the late and present Government understand each other, and are trying to smother up anything which the people should know. The amounts have been paid by the late Government, and we must indemnify them. Now, when the House is in Supply, is not the proper time to go into these matters and reflect upon the Commissioners? The accounts of last year were all laid before the House, and if hon. gentlemen choose, they can turn to them and examine, and, if necessary, a day had better be appointed for taking up and examining public Accounts.

Mr. Oudry: I rise to endorse to some extent the remarks which have fallen from the hon. member for Northumberland, Mr. Mitchell. I disclaim any desire to embarrass the Government; have quite the contrary feelings toward them, and regret that in their present position they are attempting to drag through the dead weight of the acts of the past Government. While I have full confidence in the ability and integrity of the Government still I would like to see the figures in full detail, comprising the amounts asked for. Precedents have been quoted: I am desirous, now that we have entered upon a new principle, that we should make a fair beginning, and institute a good precedent for future legislation. In initiation I have always believed; and, although some old members may grieve over the good old way, think it fortunate the initiation was given up to the Executive. The Government are working at present under very great disadvantages; still they should understand that the House expects from them all the information on the various matters brought before them which it is possible to obtain. So far as the Penitentiary is concerned, living in St. John, I have no fault to find with its management—which is, I believe, well conducted.

Mr. Sutton: All we ask is time to examine into and ascertain the correctness of the expenditure.—It is strange what a degree of cordiality seems to exist between members of the late and present Governments.

Mr. Montgomery: I don't think the question has anything to do with the late or present Government. I will never oppose any measure which I believe for the good of the country; my cordiality for the Government extends no further.

Mr. Kerr: We have the fullest and most detailed Accounts from the Penitentiary of any Provincial establishment.

Mr. Lewis: Some hon. members are very anxious that we should get through the Session very quick. I am anxious to get home as much as others, but I fear we are proceeding too rapidly. I should like to see a detailed statement brought in. If this is the practical application of the new system of initiation we may as well do away with the Legislature altogether, and stay home.

Mr. McIntosh would not be a tame follower of any Government; still he thought it impossible for a correct estimate of the amount required to be made, as it was quite uncertain what circumstances might occur to increase the expenses of the establishment under consideration. A man might steal an ox or cow, it would be difficult for the Government to say how long he would be in the penitentiary.

Mr. Mitchell: I move to report progress and ask leave to sit again on Wednesday next.

Mr. McClellan: I was opposed to the yielding up the initiation, but I have changed my mind on the subject, and believe the system will work well. I am willing to go for reporting progress in order to give the Government time to prepare and lay before the House all items of the estimates. The Attorney General: I hope the motion will not prevail.

Mr. McLeod: If this motion is pressed, I shall have to oppose it. Nothing has been done since I left the House, and it is extraordinary if the whole accumulated business of the country can be done in eight or ten days.

Hon. Mr. Speaker: This is an emergency Session, and we must do as best we can; but this need not be made a precedent for future Sessions. The Government stand in the same relative position to the House to-day, as the Supply Committee did under the old system. They have examined into the various matters as best they could, and have prepared their estimates accordingly.

Mr. Gillmor: I am astonished at the speed with which hon. members desire to get through this Session. I wished to have brought some matters before the Government before the budget was brought in; but if this was the practical working of the system of initiation by the Government; if things are to be done with this Railroad speed, which precludes application for grants and proper investigation—I should go for its repeal. I think we might and should curtail the estimated expenditure of the country, as it is entirely too great.

Mr. Brown: I do not think any practical good can result from the motion before the House, if carried. If it were possible to do any good or obtain any information as to whether the accounts are correct or not by Wednesday, then he would go for it; but that is impossible. The Government have no object whatever in hurrying, save the interest of the country.

Mr. Johnson: The Petitions referred to by Mr. Gillmor he will find are provided for in last year's budget.

Mr. Gillmor: The charge of favoritism cannot be made against the Government; the last certainly have treated me better than the present, who are supposed to be my friends.

By consent, Mr. Mitchell withdrew his motion to allow the Resolution before House to pass; which it accordingly did.

Mr. Mitchell then moved to report progress; which motion was lost.

Grant of £7,00 for Tracadie Lazaretto passed.

Grant of £4,000 for Lunatic Asylum passed; £4,500 asked for.

Grant of £2,078 2 6 for miscellaneous services, passed.

SATURDAY, June 27.

Reported as agreed to by the House in Committee of the Whole, a bill to afford relief to the Rev. Henry P. Guilford.

On motion of the Attorney General the House went into Committee of the Whole on a bill to provide for repairs and improvement of roads and bridges, and for other public improvements.

The sum mentioned for roads and bridges was £35,000, being one half the appropriation of last year.

Mr. Kerr:—The sum for roads and bridges I consider entirely inadequate; there never was a season when roads and bridges were more out of repair than they are this season, or when there was a louder cry throughout the country for bye-road money. At present the rail-road tax to prosecute works which at best are but a local benefit, is being paid by every man, woman and child throughout the province; and if one of the first steps necessary is the curtailment of the bye-road money, it becomes a matter for serious consideration. I do not think there is any necessity for this curtailing the amount now. Certainly, if the various other public works can be carried on, I see no reason why this step should be taken now. The proposed grant would not give £500 to each County, which would be nearly cut up by the Commissioners, and would be of but a trifling benefit to those persons who are in need of the assistance which the usual road expenditure affords.

Attorney General:—We cannot make any alteration in this bill now. It is based upon the resolution passed in supply yesterday, and although the sum is less than we could wish, still taking the computed revenue we were compelled to cut it down.

Mr. Connell:—I am not satisfied with the action of the Government with reference to this grant. This is the only item of expenditure which they propose to curtail, and it is the one of all others which they should give in full. The bye road grant is that which is of most general importance to the people of the province; one which they depend upon and look for with much anxiety. If any method can be proposed to reach the matter in its present stage, and increase the bye-road grant, I will most cheerfully give it my assistance. It is still early enough in the season, as July is the month in which the road money is generally expended.

Mr. McLeod:—I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman who has just set down. The question should have been raised when the House was in supply, when if the resolution were carried it would have amounted to a vote of want of confidence. The public departments and the Legislature must be kept up, although the roads are of great importance. It is said that the money is required to assist those who are suffering, but at this season of the year work can readily be obtained from farmers. Haying will soon commence, and then there will be harvesting, which will keep the people engaged, and after that it will be throwing money away to put labor on the roads.

Mr. Kerr:—It is small farmers in remote districts who feel the benefit of the bye-road money most, not people living in cities. If large sums can be taken out of the funds to pay disputed territory claims, I think the whole of the usual amount of road money might be granted.

Bill reported as agreed to.

Mr. R. K. Gilbert moved an address to the Government asking what appointments had been made to the office of Justices of the Peace and other local offices since 12th February last, and when said commissions had been issued.

Mr. Stedman moved an address asking for copies of all despatches and papers in any way relating to the late dissolution.

Order of the day resumed.

On motion, passed a grant of £200, to provide for the usual allowance to certain old soldiers of the revolutionary war, and others.

On motion, passed a grant of £7,000 to defray the expenses connected with collecting the revenue. The Attorney General stated that he had all the accounts, which hon. gentlemen who wished might see.

Mr. Mitchell:—It is strange that the Attorney General having this information, does not lay it before the House.

Mr. End:—Good lord! is there a member in this house who don't wish to see. It is a new system truly, this being called upon to grant such large sums in this nebulous way. I think in tender consideration to hon. members who really desire to know how the money of the Country is being spent the government should give all possible information.

Mr. McClellan:—I wish to ask whether the salaries of officers connected with customs, are fixed.

Attorney General:—I should propose that at an early day the House go into a consideration of the whole matter.

On motion, £300 was granted for relief of Indians.

On motion, £125 for the encouragement of oat mills.

On motion, £300 for protection of fisheries.

On motion, £6,301 to provide for certain claims on the disputed territory fund.

Resolved, on motion to grant £210 to enable Government to refund certain duties.

Considerable discussion arose out of this motion. A large part of the amount was to refund duty on water pipes imported into Saint John, and while some hon. members were opposed to the principle of returning duties at all, others thought in this instance particularly there was no just reason why a return should be made. Some hon. members contended that the water-works for which the pipes referred to, were imported, were of general importance to the Province, preserving the health of the citizens and strangers visiting St. John, and thus tending to promote the well-being of the people at large; others, that they were a mere local benefit; that they were of more benefit to the rich than the poor, and that returning those duties would only go to increase the profits of a company who make a business of supplying the city with water. In the course of debate some gentlemen intimated the opinion that St. John got entirely too large a slice of the provincial loaf.

It had been said that it would benefit the poor of the city. On this Mr. Kerr observed that the poor of Saint John had accumulated £30,000 out of the £75,000 in the Savings Bank, a much larger sum than that by the rest of the poor in the Province, and for this sum the Province was paying interest. Mr. Kerr moved an amendment to grant £696, which would leave out the proposed water-pipe duty. The amendment was lost, and the original resolution carried.

On motion, resolved that £3,200 be granted for educational purposes, as follows:—

Mr. Reed found fault with the Government for reducing the grant to the Catholic School at Bathurst. He found to his utter surprise that the amount was less than that appropriated when the school was first started. The School had very much improved, and was, he considered, deserving of the full amount. The people too were poor, and not able to pay tuition fees in many instances.

Mr. End: It would have been but courtesy had the Government consulted with the Members for Gloucester before making the appropriations for that County, even though I am not addicted to their political views. I hope, however, this is not the reason why the Government acted so in this matter; for if it is, heaven help the constituencies whose representatives are opposed to them. Here the hon. member spoke very feelingly of one John Gibbs, who, he represented, was seventy years of age—fifty of which had been spent in teaching—now in very destitute circumstances; and whose case, poor wretch, he hoped would yet be remembered.

Mr. Desbrisay: I think the Members for the various Counties are most competent to speak as to the grants that should be made. I presented a petition from one poor widow for £5 or £6, and think the Government might have taken some notice of it. I must say it savours very much of a spirit of retaliation towards those members who may be supposed opposed to the Government.

Mr. Lewis: I find a petition which I presented has been overlooked; it was one worthy of attention. I am supposed to be a friend of the Government, so that the remarks of the member from Kent are hardly justified. I am extremely sorry that the Government should commence economising by cutting down the grants to poor Schoolmasters; it is not fair, especially after giving the Saint John water works, £800.

Mr. Smith: I repudiate intimation of favoritism; the Government have no desire to visit the sins of the representatives on their constituents, nor to curtail the grants to Schools in any instance. But it is a mistaken notion that every pathetic petition should be acceded to. The school referred to by Mr. Reed is a female school, was commenced in October last, and the Teacher has in reality received more than she was entitled to.

Mr. Connell: I feel it my duty to give expression to my views on some items of the grant now asked for. I have always been opposed to the principle of granting the public money for the support of denominational schools; and in opposing the new grant now asked for, I am only doing as I have invariably done. I am not opposing this grant because the Schools are Roman Catholic, but because I consider the principle wrong, and calculated to promote evil rather than benefit. I am desirous of having one superior educational establishment instituted and maintained at the expense of the Province; I go for direct taxation for the support of schools, but am opposed to the recognition of sectarian schools. If such are necessary, let the sect support its school. I shall therefore move that so much of the grant as is intended for the two new sectarian schools be struck out. [This was the substance of Mr. Connell's Resolution; we could not obtain an exact copy of it.]

Hon. Mr. Brown: This subject of sectarian schools has been a fruitful source of trouble. The principle of giving grants to denominational schools has long been recognized. Thus we have King's College, the Madras School, Sackville Academy, Baptist Seminary, &c. The Catholic schools generally give instruction to the poorer classes, and therefore it would be particularly wrong to withdraw the grant from them. If the principle is to be altered, better commence with some other denomination.—(To be continued.)

Fire.—Early on Sunday morning, a fire broke out in one of the Steam Saw Mills of Messrs. R. Rankin and Co., at Indian Town, which was entirely consumed. Two of the city engines proceeded to the scene of conflagration, and the fire was confined to the mill in which it originated. The mill was insured for only £1,000.

Col. Tache, the Canadian premier, has been sworn in Commissioner of Crown Lands, having since Mr. Cauchon's resignation, taken charge of that department.